

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed August 9, 2005. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the subject application as amended herein.

Claims 1-46 have been cancelled from the present application. Claims 47-68 have been added to the present application.

Although claims 29, 38, and 43 were allowable, Applicant has opted to cancel them and add new claims 47-68 to more clearly capture the patentable essence of the present application.

Canceling claims 1-46 has rendered the various objections and rejections of the August 9, 2005 Office Action moot. Nonetheless, in the interest of prosecutorial expediency, Applicant will address the 102 reference, "A Loop-Detect Packet Based Self Stabilizing Bridge Protocol for Extended LANS", by Piotr Bielkowicz, et al. (hereinafter "Bielkowicz"), as cited in the Office Action. For example, new claim 47 states:

A method comprising:

independently developing an equivalent set of network attributes at each of a plurality of switches in a network without referring to the network's topology, each said equivalent set of network attributes to define the network's topology; and

independently maintaining the equivalent set of network attributes at each of the plurality of switches without referring to the network's topology to reflect a change in the network's topology.

In claim 47, a network comprises a number of switches. Each switch independently develops and maintains an equivalent set of network attributes

that define the network's topology. The attributes, however, are developed and maintained without referring to the network topology itself.

Bielkowicz, in contrast, is directed to detecting loops in a network using loop detect packets (Abstract). Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Bielkowicz does not suggest, disclose, or enable "independently developing an equivalent set of network attributes at each of a plurality of switches in a network without referring to the network's topology, each said equivalent set of network attributes to define the network's topology," as claimed in new claim 47.

Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that new claim 47 is patentable over Bielkowicz.

Applicant submits that the reasoning presented above with respect to new claim 47 similarly applies to new claims 48-68. Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 47-68 are likewise patentable over Bielkowicz.

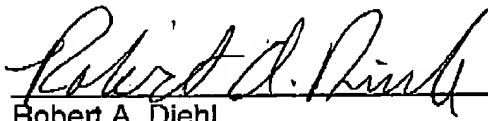
In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 47-68 are now in a condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests allowance of such claims.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overages to our Deposit Account No. 50-0221.

Respectfully submitted,

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